

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

January 23, 2001 LB 169

subjects and the discussion is germane that I will bring forth, I'm going to do it. And germaneness, as beauty, is in the mind of the beholder. Some people will try to intrude in the activities of the Legislature and will be more successful than others. If you have rag-tag, bobtail ordinary citizens coming down here, they may get short shrift and they may not, depending on the whim of the legislator or the Legislature, depending on the point of contact for that ragtag and bobtail group of ordinary, garden variety citizens whose interests we are supposed to be representing. But you let Union Pacific speak, you let Micron speak, and what's that company that had Nebraska jumping when LB 775, the granddaddy of the gouging bills, was before us? ConAgra, and the first part of their name tells you what they are--con, c-o-n. What does con mean? If a con person approaches you, that means you have a trickster, you have a schemer, you have a wily seeker after tax incentives from a Legislature which will roll over. If taxes are to be paid and a certain amount of tax revenue is needed to operate a government and carry out its necessary functions, if A, B, C, and on through the alphabet are to pay taxes, but somehow A, J, and K are able to be removed from the obligation of paying taxes, their removal does not diminish the amount of tax revenue that's needed, it simply means that somebody else is going to pay more because A, J and that other one are going to pay none. So, while we're talking this session about fairness and being concerned about the public and our constituents, we need to apply that concern when the big shots, when the deep pockets come down here and shake a fist, rattle the cage and jerk the chains of our colleagues who are at the other end of those chains. Not all of us are subject to that kind of threatening and intimidation. So I want Union Pacific to know that, although I'm but one out of forty-nine, they're going to have a struggle getting what they want. But do you think Union Pacific cares? No, because Union Pacific is not going to be down here struggling. Not one of the people who is on their payroll, as far as I know, is a member of the Legislature; so they'll be standing outside the glass, sending in messages, making phone calls and giving directives to people on this floor. The members of the Legislature are the ones who are going to labor through that battle and other battles that may turn out to be related to it. We have, what we have been told in the